

2 April 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR: Inspector General

SUBJECT : Guidance to Collectors

REFERENCE : Draft Paper on Requirements and Guidance to
Collectors

1. It seems clear that the problem of giving sound guidance to collectors has not been solved. Not only have we not found the optimum solution in the normal course of business, but the problem itself is becoming more complicated as collection systems increase in number and become more complex.

2. On the other hand, the draft paper overstates the case. In spite of rather cumbersome requirements machinery the collection activities of the intelligence community have, by and large, focused their efforts in accordance with broad priority needs for information and collected useful information concerning those subjects. Even though there are important gaps in our information that still need to be filled, these gaps are primarily the result of Soviet security measures rather than a lack of guidance to collectors. On the other side of the problem, many reports are received for analysis which do not make much of a contribution to our knowledge, but most of them are of some value and I know of no way to completely eliminate the possibility of reporters in the field sending information to Washington that is of marginal value.

3. Frankly, I do not believe that there is any single solution to the problem of requirements and guidance for collectors. Proper collection action must result from a combination of sound judgment on the part of experienced and informed intelligence officers running the collection effort, the selection of a few top priority targets of concern to the entire community, and a comprehensive list of those things which are of value to any major component of the intelligence community. Each one of these elements has an important bearing on the sound collection of useful information. The first element can be

improved only by good leadership, not by a new procedure or organizational arrangement. The third element is probably the best organized part of the problem at the present time. As a matter of fact, it might be over-organized and the effort devoted to it by the community may be excessive. The second element, however, is probably the place where we could make the greatest gain by improved community organization. The Ad Hoc Requirements Committee chaired by [] is an outstanding example of what can be done in providing agreed community wide guidance to a collector concerning priority needs for information. The beginnings of a similar approach are now being tried by the IPC. It agreed an informal list of the nine "most wanted" targets in the Soviet Union last summer.

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4. The Priority National Intelligence Objectives are useful, particularly with regard to organizing the comprehensive lists of requirements mentioned above, but they do not fill the need for highly refined lists of highest priority targets selected specifically for a given collector in the light of the capabilities and private problems of the collector.

5. Some of the members of my Staff have been discussing the concept of what they call "the intelligence market" as a means of providing guidance on high priority targets. Briefly, it would consist of a Current Situation Room, staffed by a secretariat empowered to receive requirements from a limited number of responsible officials in all intelligence agencies. Also present in the Current Situation Room would be responsible representatives of all collection agencies, each empowered to release instructions to the field representatives of his own activity. The intelligence market would receive only those requirements whose importance could be justified to senior intelligence officials at the Deputy Assistant Director level or above. All methods of collecting a requirement would be considered by the secretariat and all collectors would be aware of the important requirements being generated by the intelligence community. Each collector could assume responsibility for those requirements, or appropriate portions thereof, for which he was most likely to produce results. The secretariat being informed of all collection capabilities could assign action for those requirements for which there were no volunteers.

6. There may be a number of "bugs" in the intelligence market scheme, but I think this is the type of idea that we should explore in seeking improvements for guidance to collectors, rather than to overhaul the entire requirements system in an effort to achieve bureaucratic symmetry. In other words, I would try to improve guidance to collectors by finding ways in which the community could identify its most important needs and give those to the right collector. If we can solve this part of the problem, we might well find the rest of the

problem falling into place with relatively little trouble. If we hunt for a comprehensive solution, however, I suspect that we will only generate more red tape.

7. I concur in the draft recommendation that an ad hoc subcommittee tackle the problem, provided their terms of reference are amended to reflect the approach outlined above.

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